

## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 745

By Watson

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate the employees of the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Business Development Center on the occasion of its twentieth anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly salute those exemplary institutions that, through an abiding commitment to excellence, are a credit to their communities and this State; and

WHEREAS, the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Business Development Center (BDC) is one such extraordinary institution deserving of special recognition; and

WHEREAS, on March 6, 2008, the employees at the business incubator will celebrate twenty years of helping start-up Tennessee businesses achieve success in their entrepreneurial endeavors; and

WHEREAS, since it opened in 1988, the BDC has housed more than 500 new businesses in its 125,000-square-foot facility; the center currently houses fifty-three start-up companies with more than 400 in-house and contracted employees, generating \$7.5 million in gross wages in 2007; and

WHEREAS, the facility is owned by Hamilton County and managed by the Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce and has the great distinction of being the largest business incubator under one roof in the State of Tennessee and the third largest incubator in the nation; and

WHEREAS, the BDC offers start-up businesses office or manufacturing space at below-market rental rates and gives tenants access to BDC clerical support, and a fax machine, copier, and postage machine; the Tennessee Small Business Development Center, which also has offices in the BDC, further assists the center's entrepreneurs by providing a business library, computer and video centers, and business counseling services free of charge; and

WHEREAS, currently under the astute leadership of Director Kathryn Foster, the BDC received national recognition in 1997 when it was honored by the National Business Incubation Association as the Incubator of the Year; and

WHEREAS, the individual businesses and entrepreneurs housed by the BDC have received their own accolades and recognition, such as: Bentco Office Solutions, which won the 2004 NASA Kennedy Space Center HUBZone Subcontractor of the Year Award; Financial Solutions Network, which was the recipient of the SBA Minority Small Business Advocate Award in 2004; and Kris Simmons, the head of Fire Eye Productions, who was named the 2004 Tennessee SBA Young Entrepreneur of the Year; and

WHEREAS, the future for the BDC remains bright as the facility's employees and entrepreneurs prepare for another twenty years as an innovative and economically sound business incubator; and

WHEREAS, as its management, employees, and clients celebrate the business incubator's twentieth anniversary, the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Business Development Center continues to play an integral role in the economic life of the greater Chattanooga community and is richly deserving of this Body's recognition; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and congratulate the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Business Development Center on the occasion of its twentieth anniversary; salute the facility's management, employees, entrepreneurs, and other clients for their inventive business practices; and commend their dedicated service in establishing the center as one of the finest business incubators in the nation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.